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FM AMEMBASSY BRATISLAVA

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INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

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STATE FOR EUR/NCE, EUR/ERA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/12/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [EU](#) [LO](#)

SUBJECT: SLOVAKIA: RESPONSE TO GAERC DEMARCHE

REF: STATE 141316 STATE 143223

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Lawrence R. Silverman, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) PolEcon Chief delivered ref a points to MFA EU Correspondent Alexander Micovcin on October 11. Per ref b, DCM reinforced the Iran portion of the demarche on October 12 with MFA State Secretary Strofova. On Iran, Micovcin stated that in keeping with Slovakia's "firm line" on Iran, his expectation was that the GOS would support additional EU measures. State Secretary Strofova did not offer a definitive view in her discussion with DCM, but pledged to inform both FM Kubis and Political Director Buzek of the U.S. position before their departure for Brussels.

¶2. (C) Micovcin also provided the following information regarding Slovak positions on GAERC agenda items:

-- Russia: Micovcin echoed what we have heard from other EU diplomats: there are no great expectations for the upcoming EU-Russia summit. Given the current state of EU-Russian relations, and the timing of the meeting -- in advance of Russian elections -- there would not likely be much focus on the substance of a new Partnership Cooperation Agreement. Although Micovcin's comments suggested that the EU's approach to this summit was "to do no harm," he expected contentious issues such as Kosovo, Georgia and energy security to be on the agenda.

-- Burma: The GOS supports carefully targeted sanctions aimed at the regime, as well as continued engagement with key regional partners aimed at leveraging pressure on the regime. Micovcin stressed more than once the need for an "open dialogue" between the EU and Burma.

-- Uzbekistan: Micovcin said the EU remains split on the question of renewal of EU sanctions against Uzbekistan. Slovakia is not "hardline" on the issue, but wants to seek a credible balance between pressure and engagement.

-- Kosovo: Nothing new on the Slovak position, but Micovcin reminded that FM Kubis had requested an analysis from the European Council's legal service aimed at clarifying the legal basis of an ESDP mission.

-- Zimbabwe: Slovakia does not have a strong opinion on the question of Mugabe's presence at the EU-Africa Summit. Micovcin said that the views of African states should be taken into account, and there were potential pros and cons to either approach. Most EU members -- save UK and Sweden -- are similarly flexible, according to Micovcin.

-- Libya: Slovakia has no problem with the Council's conclusions, but Micovcin noted that one member state has objected on the grounds that the language of the conclusion

could imply some sort of privileged partnership for Libya.
(In a brief conversation with MFA Deputy Director of the 4th Territorial Department, Klara Novotna, Novota suggested to PolEcon chief that this is, in fact, Libya's expectation. In an acerbic aside she added, "A privileged relationship with the EU; Can you imagine?")

--Lebanon: As post has previously reported, Slovakia's views on a possible EU border monitoring mission are largely consistent with those of the U.S. Micovcin stressed the importance of a strong EU message of support for Lebanon's fragile democracy.

--Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process: The GOS is highly supportive of the renewed process, and remains firm on the need to maintain the political isolation of Hamas. Micovcin inquired about possible Syrian participation in the international meeting and expressed GOS support for the December Donors Conference.

-- Iraq: Micovcin confirmed that, time permitting, he expected Ministers would discuss a French/British/Swedish paper regarding reinforced cooperation between the EU and Iraq. Slovakia would support such an initiative as long as it does not imply creation of new mechanisms and structures.

SILVERMAN